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Security Council

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# Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4174th meeting of the Security Council, held on 20 July 2000, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Role of the Security Council in the prevention of armed conflicts", the President of the Security Council stated that the following statement by the President would be issued as a document of the Security Council in accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls the statements of its President of 30 November 1999 (S/PRST/1999/34), 16 September 1998 (S/PRST/1998/28), 24 September 1998 (S/PRST/1998/29), 30 November 1998 (S/PRST/1998/35), and 23 March 2000 (S/PRST/2000/10), and further recalls resolutions 1196 (1998) of 16 September 1998, 1197 (1998) of 18 September 1998, 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998, and 1209 (1998) of 19 November 1998. Bearing in mind its primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, it reaffirms its role in taking appropriate steps aimed at the prevention of armed conflicts. It affirms its commitment to the principles of the political independence, sovereign equality and territorial integrity of all States. The Council also affirms the need for respect for human rights and the rule of law.

"The Security Council stresses the need for the maintenance of regional and international peace and stability and friendly relations among all States, and underlines the overriding humanitarian and moral imperative as well as the economic advantages of preventing the outbreak and escalation of conflicts. It highlights, in this regard, the need to create a culture of prevention. The Council reaffirms its belief that early warning, preventive diplomacy, preventive deployment, preventive disarmament, and post-conflict peace-building are interdependent and complementary components of a comprehensive conflict prevention strategy. The Council emphasizes its continuing commitment to addressing the prevention of armed conflicts in all regions of the world.

"The Security Council recognizes that peace is not only the absence of conflict, but requires a positive, dynamic, participatory process where dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation. Bearing in mind that causes of conflict are often nurtured in the minds of human beings, the Council calls on Member States, relevant bodies of the United Nations system and other relevant organizations to promote a

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culture of peace. It recognizes the importance of appropriate implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September 1999 (A/RES/53/243), for preventing violence and conflicts as well as strengthening efforts aimed at the creation of conditions of peace and its consolidation through post-conflict peace-building.

"The Security Council recalls its important role in the peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. It reaffirms the importance of its consideration of all situations which might deteriorate into armed conflicts and to consider follow-up action, as appropriate. In this regard, it expresses continued willingness to consider the use of Council missions, with the consent of host countries, in order to determine whether any dispute, or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute, is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, and to make recommendations for action by the Security Council, as appropriate.

"The Security Council highlights the importance of the full support of all States for the efforts of the Security Council and other relevant United Nations organs and agencies in developing and implementing appropriate strategies for the prevention of armed conflicts in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council underlines the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes and recalls the obligation of the parties to disputes to seek actively a peaceful solution in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council also recalls the obligation of all Member States to accept and carry out its decisions, including those for the prevention of armed conflict.

"The Security Council also stresses the importance of a coordinated international response to economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems, which are often the root causes of armed conflicts.

"The Security Council recalls the essential role of the Secretary-General in the prevention of armed conflicts in accordance with Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations, and expresses its willingness to take appropriate preventive action in response to matters brought to its attention by States or the Secretary-General and which it deems likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council encourages the ongoing efforts within the United Nations system to enhance its early warning capacity, and notes in this regard the importance of drawing on information from a variety of sources, given the multiple factors that contribute to conflict. It invites the Secretary-General to make recommendations to the Council, taking into account the views of Member States, and in light of past experiences, on the most effective and appropriate early warning strategies, bearing in mind the need to link early warning with early response. The Council invites the Secretary-General to present to the Council reports on such disputes, including, as appropriate, early warning and proposals for preventive measures.

"The Security Council recognizes the important role regional organizations and arrangements play in the prevention of armed conflicts, including through the development of confidence- and security-building measures, and re-emphasizes the need for effective and sustained cooperation

and coordination between the United Nations and these regional organizations and arrangements in the prevention of armed conflict, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. It expresses its willingness, within its responsibilities, to support the efforts of the Secretary-General in collaborating with the leadership of regional organizations and arrangements in order to develop strategies and programmes to be employed at the regional level. In this regard, it encourages the strengthening of modalities of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements, including in early warning and the mutual exchange of information. It recognizes the need to enhance the capacity of the Organization of African Unity and, in particular, its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of effective post-conflict peace-building strategies in preventing the re-emergence of conflicts. In this context, it also recognizes the need for close cooperation among bodies of the United Nations system and with other organizations and arrangements in the area of post-conflict peace-building, and expresses its willingness to consider ways to improve such cooperation. It also stresses that the design of peacekeeping mandates which fully take into account operational military requirements and other relevant situations on the ground could help prevent the re-emergence of conflicts. It highlights the importance of strengthening its cooperation with the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with Article 65 of the Charter of the United Nations, in the area of the prevention of armed conflicts, including in addressing the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems which are often the root causes of conflicts. It underlines that economic rehabilitation and reconstruction constitute important elements in the long-term development of post-conflict societies and the maintenance of lasting peace, and stresses the importance of international assistance in this regard.

"The Security Council highlights the importance of preventive deployment in armed conflicts and reiterates its willingness to consider the deployment, with the consent of the host country, of preventive missions in appropriate circumstances.

"The Security Council recalls the emphasis it placed in its statement of 23 March 2000 on the process of disarmament, demobilization and re-integration, which can be vital in stabilizing post-conflict situations, reducing the likelihood of renewed violence and facilitating the transition from conflict to normalcy and development. The Council will also take appropriate measures, with the consent of the State concerned, aimed at preventing the recurrence of armed conflicts, through, *inter alia*, developing adequate programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and re-integration of ex-combatants, including child soldiers.

"The Security Council recognizes the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building. It stresses the importance of their increased participation in all aspects of the conflict prevention and resolution process.

"The Security Council recognizes the fact that the illegal exploitation of and trade in natural resources, particularly diamonds, can contribute to the

escalation of conflicts. The Council is particularly concerned that the proceeds from the illegal exploitation of and trade in high value commodities such as diamonds are providing funds for arms purchases, thus aggravating conflicts and humanitarian crises, in particular in Africa. It therefore expresses its willingness to seek the cooperation of Member States and the business community in curbing the illegal exploitation of and trade in these resources, particularly diamonds, and in effectively implementing the measures imposed by its relevant resolutions aimed at curbing illicit diamond flows.

"The Security Council, while fully conscious of the responsibilities of other United Nations organs, emphasizes the crucial importance of disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery for the maintenance of international peace and security.

"The Security Council also highlights, in particular, the importance of preventive disarmament in averting armed conflicts, and expresses concern that the proliferation, excessive and destabilizing accumulation and circulation of small arms and light weapons in many parts of the world have contributed to the intensity and duration of armed conflicts and pose a threat to peace and security. It calls upon States, international organizations and the business community to increase their efforts for prevention of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

"The Security Council also emphasizes the importance of continued coordinated regional and international action with regard to small arms and welcomes initiatives such as the Organization of American States Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other Related Materials, the European Union/Southern African Development Community Action Programme for Tackling Arms Trafficking in Southern Africa and the Economic Community of West African States Moratorium on light weapons. It welcomes and encourages efforts to prevent and combat the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of and the illicit trafficking in small arms.

"The Security Council underlines the vital importance of effective national regulations and controls on small arms transfers. The Council also encourages Governments to exercise the highest degree of responsibility in these transactions. It also calls for complementary supply- and demand-side measures, including those against illegal diversion and re-export. It also underlines the obligation of all States to enforce existing arms interdiction measures. The Council emphasizes that the prevention of illicit trafficking is of immediate concern in the global search for ways and means to curb the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms, especially in regions of conflict.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of adequate, stable and predictable resources for preventive action. The Council also recognizes the importance of consistent funding for long-term preventive activities. The Council encourages the consideration of conflict prevention in development assistance strategies and recognition of the need to ensure a smooth transition from emergency humanitarian assistance to development in the post-conflict stage.

"The Security Council acknowledges the important activities supported by the Trust Fund for Preventive Action and encourages Member States to contribute to this Trust Fund.

"The Security Council recognizes the increasing demand for civilian police as a critical element in peacekeeping operations as part of the general approach to conflict prevention. It calls upon Member States to explore ways to meet this demand in a timely and effective way. The Council invites the Secretary-General to include his recommendations in this respect in the report on conflict prevention requested below.

"The Security Council underlines the need for continued in-depth consideration of this issue and, in this regard, invites the Secretary-General to submit to the Council, by May 2001, a report containing an analysis, and recommendations on initiatives within the United Nations, taking into account previous experience and the views and considerations expressed by Member States, on the prevention of armed conflict.

"The Security Council affirms that a reformed, strengthened and effective United Nations remains central to the maintenance of peace and security of which prevention is a key component and underlines the importance of enhancing the capacity of the Organization in preventive action, peacekeeping and peace-building.

"The Security Council recalls the statement of its President of 30 November 1999 and reaffirms its willingness to consider the possibility of a meeting at the level of Foreign Ministers on the issue of the prevention of armed conflicts during the Millennium Assembly.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."